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Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 7 October 1991, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. SHIHABI (Saudi Arabia)

later: Mr. WILENSKI (Australia)
(Vice-President)

- Address by His Majesty Don Juan Carlos I, King of Spain

- General debate [9] (continued)

  Statements by

  Mr. King (Barbados)
  Mr. Jameel (Maldives)
  Mr. Grant (Guyana)
  Mr. Toure (Guinea-Bissau)
  Mr. Drame (Mali)

- Adoption of the agenda and organization of work: second report of the General Committee [8] (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

ADDRESS BY HIS MAJESTY DON JUAN CARLOS I, KING OF SPAIN

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): This morning the Assembly will hear an address by His Majesty the King of Spain.

His Majesty King Juan Carlos I of Spain was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Majesty King Juan Carlos I of Spain, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

King JUAN CARLOS I (interpretation from Spanish): Mr. President, I should like to tell you how very pleased I am to see the representative of a country linked to mine by traditional ties of friendship and cooperation responsible for directing the work of the General Assembly. Your personal qualities and acknowledged experience will contribute to ensuring that this session will conclude with successful results.

I also wish to underscore the skill and competence of your distinguished predecessor, Mr. Guido de Marco, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Justice of Malta, and, in all fairness, to express the respect inspired in me by the admirable work performed at the head of the Organization by its very distinguished Secretary-General, Mr. Perez de Cuellar, who has made so many and such varied efforts on behalf of peace in complicated and difficult circumstances.

I should like also to extend my warmest welcome to the seven new Members which have just joined the United Nations: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania - whose newly-recovered independence has given us cause for rejoicing - as well

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as the Republic of Korea, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

Once again it has been the wish of the Spanish Governnment that the King, by virtue of the functions conferred upon him under the Constitution, should address this universal gathering. He does so on behalf of a country which was one of the first in history to decide to become a nation-State, and which as such has been contributing since the dawn of the modern age to the birth and normative development of international society. Thus, as a constitutional monarch, I represent an ancient nation and also a young people which, for this reason and also because it has recovered democracy and freedom, faces the future with hope and enthusiasm.

It was also with hope that the founders of the United Nations conceived of it as a centre for harmonizing the efforts of the world's people to attain international peace and security, as an institution designed to foster cooperation among nations for the solution of their economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems and also as an Organization devoted to reaffirming faith in the rights of man and the dignity of the human being by eliminating discrimination based on race or sex, belief or ideas.

Since the San Francisco Conference, the world has undergone profound transformations and has been subject to considerable change. Nevertheless, our peoples aspire - today more than ever - to ordering their coexistence both within and outside their borders in accordance with the same ideals of peace, justice and liberty that constitute the fundamental triad upon which this Organization has been based ever since it was founded almost half a century ago. The best guarantee for a future of hope for all mankind lies in the realization of these ideals.

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It is necessary to emphasize the many achievements of the Organization on the long and difficult path leading to the universal realization of this threefold ideal, which is enunciated in the Preamble to its founding Charter.

The United Nations has contributed, in an outstanding way, to avoiding confrontation among States, to preventing the outbreak of armed conflicts, or to limiting their effects on civilian populations. It has also demonstrated recently that the international community is capable of reacting effectively and jointly for the purpose of facing up to aggression. And it continues to carry out a commendable effort of peacemaking in different regions of the world, whether by keeping the peace in situations of potential conflict or by promoting peace where it must be re-established.

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The United Nations has been first of all the spur, and then the powerful driving force, in the process of decolonization which, in the short span of a few decades, has radically transformed the structure and the very composition of international society. Society has been enriched by the accession to it of many peoples and countries which formerly were colonized and which today are represented here in their capacity of sovereign and independent States.

Nevertheless, colonialism has not yet disappeared from the world, and for this reason this General Assembly has proclaimed the 10 years from 1990 to the year 2000 as the International Decade for its elimination. I trust that this noble aspiration may soon be realized, thereby eliminating once and for all any vestiges of anachronistic situations incompatible with the current world order.

In this connection, I cannot refrain from mentioning a colonial problem which has not yet been resolved and which affects the territorial integrity of Spain. Moreover, as members are aware, it is an issue especially sensitive for all Spaniards. It is the issue of Gibraltar, and today I wish to reiterate my hope that the Hispano-British negotiating process now under way will be effective in achieving a solution compatible with the times in which we live.

The activity of the United Nations system has been enormous in the sphere of economic and social development, establishing guidelines and criteria, endowing funds and programmes and designing structures for cooperation which have benefited hundreds of millions of people on every continent.

The United Nations has also inaugurated a new era in the history of international relations by introducing a whole set of mechanisms and instruments aimed at promoting respect for human rights. In so doing, it has

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effectively delimited the scope of one of the principles on which international society is based. Now it is no longer possible in our day to maintain that action defending human rights and exercised within the framework of the Charter constitutes interference in the internal affairs of a State. This is certainly a decisive advance on the path to the protection of human dignity from the abuses and outrages that may be committed against it through the arbitrary exercise of public powers or of any other centre of power within a society.

It is precisely the success that Member States have achieved in the implementation of such noble aspirations that moves me to express the deep respect that this Organization inspires in me, as well as my respect for the work and efforts which the representatives of the respective Governments devote daily to the cause of peace in the world, to human freedom, and to justice for all peoples.

The peaceful solution of disputes, respect for human rights and the fostering of the economic and social development of peoples constitute the basic pillars sustaining peace. If one of them were to be removed, the entire edifice would crumble. Hence, the international order which all of us together must build.

In this endeavour Spain is sparing no effort to collaborate with the United Nations. Thus, and in response to the Secretary-General's appeals, Spain has taken part in the commendable activity of the peace-keeping forces, first in Namibia and Angola, and then in Central America. We are very pleased that Spaniards - both civilians and military - are, with them, actively contributing with colleagues from many other countries to the promotion of peace and coexistence in different parts of the world.

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In recent years, Spain has also considerably raised its contribution to the Organization's voluntary funds and programmes, ranging from those whose purpose is the promotion of development to those devoted to the social groups most in need of attention, such as children, refugees or populations affected by natural disasters. This commitment is due to the higher level of development attained by Spain in recent times. We undertake it with total conviction and the Spanish Government intends to work resolutely towards this goal.

The end of the cold war has opened up very hopeful prospects for mankind though the world is not yet free of tensions and risks.

We have recently witnessed spectacular changes, which, we hope, have irreversibly ushered in a new climate of détente and cooperation, where confrontation and mistrust formerly reigned. The transformations now under way in the Soviet Union and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the vigorous revival of democratic ideals and practices in Latin America, and the progressive dismantling of the system of apartheid in South Africa, as well as democratic trends on the African continent, have led to the emergence on a universal scale of a rejuvenated flow of hopeful expectations. But these expectations, which at times are conflicting, are putting to the test not only the structures and the chances for transformation of many countries, but also the capacity of the international community to respond to the yearnings for democracy and progress of large groups of peoples who have recovered their faith in themselves. We cannot forget that, just as freedom is an essential condition for peaceful coexistence, the latter must also be based on justice and on the prosperity of peoples - of all peoples - who rightfully demand adequate economic and social development.

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For all these reasons, although the United Nations has played a major role in the changing world over the past few years, its role in the new world now being reshaped will be even greater. In this new world, the ending of the confrontation between East and West places more in evidence another division which is no less dramatic - the North-South division. It is a world in which the differences between developed and developing countries not only continue to exist, but are becoming even greater.

This imbalance has been particularly disquieting during the past decade in Latin America and in Africa, continents in which the rate of growth of resources has been lower than that of the population. The correcting of this trend constitutes a challenge which we must face not only because it is an imperative of justice, but also on behalf of peace and security for all. In our international community, which is closely interdependent, economic deterioration in any part of the world generates negative consequences for the other parts. A coordinated effort by the industrialized countries, in conjunction with the developing countries, is needed in order to stimulate harmonious growth that assures a decent standard of living for the vast sectors of mankind, who today live in poverty, or who are struggling to overcome stagnation or backwardness.

Now we are all much more aware that economic development is scarcely possible if the rules of a market economy that allow for private initiative are not respected. Despite its imperfections, the market constitutes an irreplaceable guide for economic activity and is indispensable for a rational allocation of resources. But, at the same time, it will always be necessary, in the general interest, to complement it with appropriate correctives in order to meet the needs of the least favoured sectors or groups.

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Societies cannot advance if they do not pay proper attention to the development of their human resources. It is important to raise the hopes and living conditions of the population and their level of literacy, improve nutrition and reduce the rate of infant mortality. These are important social indices because it is the human being and not the State which is ultimately in possession of the right to development.

It will be difficult to achieve these objectives if national societies do not organize themselves on the basis of respect for certain principles, among which must be mentioned the rule of law, independence of the judiciary and the safeguarding of human rights. These goals cannot be attained if society does not endow itself with political systems that allow for the participation of the people and the free election of their leaders. One of the great achievements of civilization has precisely been the designing of political structures capable of reconciling the essential equality of all people with the diversity of thought and interests that provide their driving force.

From this perspective it is encouraging to note the emergence of a consensus within the United Nations on these issues. At the same time we are convinced that the easing of international tension and the end of the cold war will provide many opportunities for slowing down the arms race and making further progress in disarmament agreements, as shown by the recent United States initiatives and proposals which have been welcomed so favourably. These are opportunities which must be seized so that we can devote a large part of the resources released to fostering economic growth and social progress the world over.

I shall add another consideration which is perhaps the most important. There can be no sustained economic development if we do not respect the

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environment, which provides us with natural resources and is the framework that sustains human life on the planet which we share as our common home.

We must combine our efforts today more than ever before, in order to eliminate the sources of pollution from the atmosphere and the air which we breathe; in order to confront the dangers which threaten our oceans, seas and rivers; and in order to ensure the survival of the woods and the biological diversity of plants and animal species. This is the greatest challenge now facing the international community. The settlement of these problems must be a priority goal for all Governments, which must set their sights on future generations. They have the right to inherit a living planet, and it is our obligation to bequeath it to them. The United Nations also took pioneering action in this area for the first time barely two decades ago, by including environmental issues on the list of matters of global interest.

The United Nations continues to keep aflame the torch that was lit in Stockholm. Once more the United Nations has taken the immensely important decision to convene a Conference on Environment and Development next year. The initiative is just as timely as is appropriate the decision to place environmental protection within a context of interdependence for the purpose of sustained growth and development for all countries. It requires nations with wealthy economies to devote supplementary financial resources to the developing countries and to be willing to transfer to them the technologies needed to protect the environment.

Action by Governments on a national and international scale is necessary but not sufficient. Concerted efforts on the part of companies, the media, the scientific community and non-governmental organizations are needed in order to meet this global challenge.

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Much has been done, but much more remains for us to do. When preparing for the Conference, I am certain that members will be very conscious of the fact that conservation and the improvement of the environment are the means to the survival of mankind. And at this point allow me to indicate - as did the Secretary-General last year - that just as the Organization's Charter is the basic instrument governing relations between States, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that which regulates relations between the State and the individual, the time has come to think about drawing up an instrument that regulates the relations between mankind and nature.

We are on the threshold of a year of special importance and relevance for my country, and also for Europe, for America and for the whole world. The full integration of Spain into the European Community will culminate in 1992, at the same time as the Community completes its single market and takes new and decisive steps towards political, economic and monetary union. It is our fervent desire and also a very firm commitment on our part that this process be directed to promoting stability and progress in continental Europe as a whole, and also that it will be accompanied by the continuous opening up of Europe to the rest of the world, as befits its historic essence and its most genuine interests.

In 1992 - five centuries after the initial meeting between the old and the new worlds - we Spaniards will take on the important responsibility of hosting events as important as the Seville World Fair, the Barcelona Olympic Games and the Second Ibero-American Conference, which will be the continuation of the one held this year in Mexico.

With all this, we hope that Spain in 1992 will be a meeting-place for men and women from all over the world, a crossroads for scientific and cultural

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contributions and sporting successes, and a setting for reflection and plans for our common future. Far from being a mere simplistic exercise in exaltation, we would like the universal spirit with which the United Nations is infused to preside also over the activities that will take place in our country in 1992 and to which all members and their respective countries are cordially invited.

I wanted to share some thoughts with you on the major issues now facing the international community as a whole. Mankind's very survival and the shape of its future depend on the way that they are approached and resolved.

The international community is equipped with the most appropriate instrument for meeting this important challenge: the United Nations. For this reason I wished today to reaffirm my confidence in the Organization and in its ability to attain increasingly greater heights of peace, justice and freedom for all peoples.

Lastly, I should like to reiterate the fervent wish of the Spanish Government and people, to participate in and contribute more actively to the endeavours of the United Nations on the basis of the experience of our past, our present energy and our hope for the future. Please rest assured that in this lofty undertaking the United Nations may count upon the solidarity and support of Spain and its King.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): On behalf of the General Assembly I wish to thank his Majesty the King of Spain for the important statement he has just made and for the words he was kind enough to address to me and to my country.

His Majesty King Juan Carlos I of Spain was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. KING (Barbados): Sir, I am pleased to join those who have already congratulated you on your election to the presidency of the forty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly. Your vast experience of United Nations affairs and your consummate diplomatic skills give us every confidence that you will discharge your responsibilities with distinction.

I note with pleasure the enhanced representation of the Pacific subregion in the United Nations. The States of the Pacific and the Caribbean, although divided by geography, are close and constant partners, in this forum and others, in the search for solutions to the unique challenges confronting small island developing nations. Our shared experiences, perspectives and aspirations contribute a special dimension to the dialogue of this diverse community of nations. Barbados is therefore delighted to offer a fraternal welcome to the new Member States of the Marshall Islands and Micronesia.

It is also of particular significance for my delegation that today, in furtherance of the principles of universality of membership, we welcome into the United Nations family the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea. We look forward to their active contribution to the work

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of the Organization and hope, in turn, that within the supportive framework of the United Nations they will find a means of building bridges towards a common future.

We also take pleasure in welcoming the republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and salute the restoration of their sovereignty.

May I also take this opportunity to endorse the tributes paid to your distinguished predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Guido de Marco. We commend him for his innovative use of the presidency as a catalyst for promoting dialogue on ways to revitalize and enhance the effectiveness of the General Assembly. We are confident, Sir, that under your able leadership dialogue will be constructively advanced throughout the coming months.

Barbados also congratulates its regional compatriot, His Excellency Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for his careful stewardship of the Organization over this complex and unprecedented period of its history. The unassuming brand of diplomacy of the Secretary-General and his high-level team has contributed significantly to the recent progress in many of the hitherto intractable problems confronting the United Nations.

Now, at this critical juncture in international relations, the choice of a new Secretary-General is naturally of vital relevance to us all. The person we choose must be a leader capable of preserving the independence and integrity of the post, a mediator capable of maintaining a healthy balance among the competing interests represented within the Organization and a committed activist who will inspire universal confidence in the ability of the United Nations to fulfil decisively and impartially the vital functions prescribed for it in the Charter. In making the selection due regard must also be given, in my delegation's view, to the principle of rotation.

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The momentous developments of the past two years have brought profound and irreversible change to the conduct of relations among nations. The death of the cold war - and with it the rapid disappearance of the ideological divide - has occasioned a remarkable assembly of new partners, concrete prospects for disarmament, expectations of trickle-down benefits of the so-called peace dividend and confident pronouncements that a new world order is at hand. The euphoria, however, has been short lived. War and devastation in the Persian Gulf and the recent dramatic internal disintegration of an empire in the east are poignant reminders of the difficult adjustments that lie ahead in a world devoid of the familiar status quo.

Recent developments in the Soviet Union and the reaction of the international community to those developments show the extent to which old enmities and suspicions have receded and the concept of global interdependence has taken hold. On 19 August 1991 the Government of Barbados publicly condemned as unconstitutional and undemocratic the attempt to remove the legitimate President of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics from office by force.*

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* Mr. Wilenski (Australia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) did likewise. The people of Barbados were moved by the courage and dignity with which the Soviet people successfully withstood this dangerous threat and they stand ready, with the international community, to support them in whatever forms of peaceful association they may freely choose for themselves.

We are, however, deeply concerned over the breakdown of civil order and the outbreak of armed conflict in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. We urge all parties to the conflict to pursue their goals through peaceful means and to support the peacemaking efforts of the European Community.

The Gulf War was a tragedy, not only for the innocent people of Iraq and Kuwait, but also for the international community as a whole. It provided a chilling reminder of the extent to which the unfettered ambition of even a single individual can sometimes destroy overnight the fragile and uncertain world peace for which this Organization strives. It was of vital importance that the United Nations should act in this far-reaching crisis to demonstrate unambiguously that naked aggression has no place in the modern world and that every State, no matter how small or militarily insignificant, has the sovereign right to exist in peace and security.

The results of the encounter in the Gulf are not, however, in my delegation's view, cause for triumphant celebration. They are an occasion, rather, for sober reflection on the enormous human consequences of war and on the ways in which we can work together to eradicate the conditions for its recurrence.

Forty years of cold-war polarization within the United Nations have effectively prevented us from putting into place, under Article 43 of the

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Charter, the contingency provisions necessary for collective United Nations enforcement action under the direction of the Security Council.

The Gulf crisis stands as the first post-cold-war test of the application of the principle of collective security. The case of Kuwait is sui generis, and the ad hoc coalition of interests that responded is unlikely to recur in the face of other breaches of the peace. The new spirit of cooperation among the five permanent members brings with it the prospect of a revitalized Security Council, finally capable of carrying out its far-reaching responsibilities under the Charter. It is therefore necessary to put at the Council's disposal the permanent enforcement tools needed to deter and, in the last resort, counter aggression. Ad hoc mechanisms are of uncertain comfort to small, resource-poor States like my own, which look to the United Nations as the only impartial guarantor of their security. Greater impetus must also be given to strengthening the capabilities of the Security Council and of the Secretary-General in the prevention and resolution of conflicts.

Care must also be taken to balance the powers and responsibilities of the Security Council through genuine consultation and involvement of the wider United Nations membership. Indeed, the Secretary-General stressed in the 1990 Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organization that

> "agreement among the major Powers must carry with it the support of a majority of Member States if it is to make the desired impact on the world situation. It is the willing endorsement of the decisions of the Security Council by the international community that can best counter any impression, likely to create anxiety, of world affairs being run by a directorate". (A/45/1, p. 13)

The end of cold-war tensions provides a historic opportunity for United Nations diplomacy to focus on bringing lasting peace to the remaining areas of

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regional conflict. Barbados is heartened by the tentative steps taken in this regard in the Middle East. We fully support the holding of an international conference, with the participation of all the parties concerned, aimed at achieving a just settlement that respects both the right of the Palestinian people to a homeland and that of Israel to live in peace and security within recognized borders.

Barbados further notes the significant progress made in the arduous process towards a lasting Cambodian peace and the pivotal role required of the United Nations in the implementation of the final peace agreement. The United Nations efforts in facilitating the process towards peaceful settlement in Western Sahara deserve similar recognition and support from Member States.

In our region, Barbados welcomes the normalization of relations between Belize and Guatemala and the historic moves towards a negotiated solution to any outstanding differences. A relaxation of tensions between these two neighbours will contribute enormously to strengthening relations between Central America and the Caribbean Community. Concrete steps have already been taken towards this end and I look forward to the inauguration, next month in Honduras, of what I hope will be a process of regular ministerial dialogue and cooperation between Central America and CARICOM.

We are likewise heartened by the recent breakthrough in negotiations between the Government of El Salvador and the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) and the signing of the New York agreement on 25 September 1991, which offer the first real prospects for the realization of a definitive and lasting peace in that troubled country.

It is our earnest hope that a spirit of conciliation, dialogue and good-neighbourliness will be brought to bear on remaining tensions between countries in our hemisphere.

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Within this general atmosphere of progress and optimism, last week's events in Haiti stand out as an anachronistic blot upon the regional landscape. The Member States of the Caribbean Community were intimately involved in the regional and international efforts to assist the electoral and democratization process in Haiti and are outraged at the crude and callous attempts to thwart the will of the Haitian people. Barbados will have no dealings with the usurpers in Port-au-Prince and fully supports the actions taken by the Organization of American States aimed at reversing the coup and restoring the legitimate government of Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide to office. It is imperative that the United Nations act in concert to ensure the success of the regional effort.

Genuine and complete disarmament is an indispensable element for consolidating peace. Barbados welcomes the important initiatives recently announced by the Governments of the United States and the USSR with regard to nuclear disarmament and hopes that these will provide momentum for real progress in this vital area. We also fully support the renewed interest of the international community in creating a regime for the prohibition of chemical weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. My country, Barbados, stands ready to forswear their use in perpetuity.

The international community must permit the United Nations a more active role in ensuring that disarmament gains in some parts of the world are not offset by spiralling arms races in others. Barbados is convinced of the vital need for transparency in the sale and transfer of weapons and supports the creation and maintenance of the appropriate register under United Nations auspices. Regional and subregional security arrangements should be actively encouraged under the umbrella of the Charter.

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Since 1982, countries in the Eastern Caribbean have participated in a regional security system of our own. As vulnerable micro-States, we are persuaded that increased militarization to counter a potential external aggressor does little to enhance national security, but carries instead its own potential for internal destabilization. We have therefore opted for an arrangement that combines a minimal internal force with a joint rapid-response capability to deal with any threat in any one of the participating territories. The resources of the system are channelled when needed to other areas of functional cooperation, including drug interdiction and disaster relief.

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There is interest in expanding the system to include other territories of the Caribbean Community, and a committee, which I have the honour to chair, is actively pursuing the matter. This Caribbean initiative is consistent with the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter, and we are confident that it will now enjoy the full support of a revitalized Security Council.

The issue of apartheid is one of the continuing concerns of my delegation. While we are encouraged by the advances noted in the Secretary-General's second progress report on the implementation of the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa, we are greatly concerned about the violence that has obstructed the political dialogue so vital to the achievement of non-racial democracy in South Africa. We therefore fervently hope that the Johannesburg peace agreement signed on 14 September 1991 will ensure an environment of trust and security in which the proposed multi-party conference can proceed.

In this context, Barbados supports the view expressed in the Abuja Declaration of 29 July 1991 that negotiation leading to the drawing up and adoption of a non-racial and democratic constitution is now the most urgent and pressing question.

We firmly believe that the international community should continue to exert pressure on the Pretoria regime through the maintenance of financial and economic sanctions until there is evidence of profound and irreversible change leading to a non-racial democracy in South Africa. Only partial steps towards that goal have so far been taken. Let us resolve to stay the course until apartheid, that crime against humanity, is no more.

Many voices have proclaimed a new world order. Few, however, have defined it. For the delegation of Barbados, that definition must go beyond

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purely military or political concepts. In the past few years we have witnessed dramatic progress towards the universal attainment of human freedom. But freedom cannot translate into lasting peace in a world where hundreds of millions still live in utter poverty and deprivation, and where 23 per cent of the world's population enjoys 85 per cent of the world's wealth. A new world order must be based on social justice and afford all people the opportunity to benefit from the development of the resources of this planet. Unfortunately, there is little evidence of any real prospect of enlightened action in this regard. On the contrary, the gap between North and South continues to grow.

For developing countries to earn their way in the brave new world of the 1990s and beyond, urgent steps must be taken genuinely to liberalize trade, to alleviate the debt burden and to reverse the net outflow of resources from South to North. It is essential that the Uruguay Round be speedily and successfully concluded. Further debt-relief measures, including the question of debt owed to multilateral financial institutions, must also be addressed.

The concept of sustainable and environmentally sound economic development has been brought sharply into focus as the United Nations prepares for the 1992 Conference on Environment and Development. All nations share, in some measure, in the environmental degradation that has beset our planet and must all work together to find solutions to this critical issue.

Indeed, the acceptance by the developed countries of principal responsibility for global environmental pollution is a step in the right direction. Regrettably, however, acceptance has not always led to action. Some have continued to treat issues which are central to the success of the 1992 Conference as charity rather than as a collective responsibility. Simple

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justice demands a higher degree of political commitment than has been in evidence so far in the preparations for the 1992 Conference. We call on those countries to act responsibly in the efforts under way to launch a new era of environmentally sustainable development.

For my own country, the pursuit of sustainable development has been hampered by contradictory signals from the North. Barbados has always followed, without coercion, all the accepted prescriptions for development. Our society has evolved against a background of genuine representative democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law, minimal military expenditure, public accountability and careful management of scarce resources in pursuit of people-oriented policies. Recognition of Barbados's comprehensive network of social services and high quality of life is clearly reflected in the 1991 human development report of the United Nations Development Programme.

Yet the irony remains that the international economic environment provides no reward for good performance. At the precise moment when it is being lauded as a model of development planning, Barbados has reached the stage where its earnings in a fiercely protected market can no longer sustain its accomplishments. For there is no supportive network to encourage middle-income developing countries towards higher stages of development. The examples around us seem to suggest that from now on it is to be a constant game of snakes and ladders.

I referred earlier to the dialogue on General Assembly reform that is currently taking place. My delegation believes that it is important to take urgent steps to improve the efficiency and relevance of the General Assembly within the Organization's aims and purposes. However, in our eagerness to

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re-energize the United Nations, we must be careful not to act impulsively, without fully and carefully analysing all the implications. For we may yet find that the problem may not have been in the existing system itself but rather in the paralysis to which that system had fallen victim.

Mr. JAMEEL (Maldives): Allow me at the outset on behalf of the delegation of the Maldives to convey to Ambassador Shihabi our sincere congratulations on his election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session. His election is a tribute not only to his dedicated contribution to this Organization but also to the country he represents, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, with which the Maldives has long had ties of friendship and bonds of Islamic brotherhood. I am fully confident that his wise guidance and leadership will enable this session of the General Assembly to deal effectively with the very important issues on its agenda.

Allow me also to express my delegation's deep appreciation and esteem to His Excellency Mr. Guido de Marco, President of the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session, for the distinction with which he discharged his onerous responsibilities.

(Mr. Jameel, Maldives)

Maldives rejoices at this session's admission of seven new Member States to membership of our family of independent and sovereign nations, taking us yet another step closer to the realization of the universality of the Organization. We are indeed happy to see among us the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands, which share with us many geographical features and entertain similar political and economic aspirations. We warmly welcome to our midst the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, two States with which the Maldives has long enjoyed a cordial and friendly relationship. We hope that their membership in the United Nations will help provide opportunities for the peoples of Korea to reconcile their differences and live in harmony. In addition, we are delighted and honoured to witness the return to the international community of the three Baltic countries, the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Latvia and the Republic of Lithuania.

As we are about to carry out the important and difficult task of electing a successor to Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar as the Secretary-General, allow me to pay a special tribute to him and salute him with admiration and gratitude. We in the Maldives will remember him as a man of wisdom, patience and great skill in diplomacy, and as a statesman who served the international community in difficult times with conviction and dignity. I take this opportunity to wish him well in the years to come.

We have witnessed dramatic changes on the international political scene during recent years. These changes have taken place in such rapid succession that the world has had to hasten to adjust itself to the changing realities. The events continue to flow one after another, giving us unprecedented opportunities for peace and for building a new world order based on justice and equality. This makes the current session of the General Assembly a very

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critical one. The United Nations, being the most universal of all international organizations, needs to address itself to these changes. More important, it needs to play a revitalized role as the guardian, as the broker and as the enforcer of peace and justice in the world. Let us at this moment, leaning on the lofty principles of our Charter, jointly show some creativity and redefine our objectives as the founding fathers of the Organization did 45 years ago.

Among other significant events in recent months, we have seen the happy ending of the cold-war escapades, and perhaps with it the East-West competition for supremacy, which sadly haunted the human race for over 40 years. While applauding the players for their vision and courageous decisions, we remain cautious about what the new world order promises us for the future. The expectations are no doubt high, and the demands are increasing as we go on dismantling the policies and alliances which imposed on the world an unjustified status quo, inhibiting the process of peace and justice. We are particularly apprehensive about whether this new order will be fair to the developing countries - especially the least developed among them.

My delegation is of the view that a new world order - if there is going to be one - should be fair and just, based on the very principles we have striven to put into effect in the past. It should be an order of peace and peaceful coexistence, tolerance and sensible compromise. It would be a pity if we were to allow fads of political hegemony, extreme protectionism, hard-core nationalism, and/or racism to grow again under our feet as we sit enjoying the comfort of the breeze blowing today; indeed this could have dire consequences. The new order should be democratically formulated and jointly implemented; an order that would address the concerns of the peoples in the

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North and South, East and West, without discrimination or privilege. In our endeavour to establish the new world order, we should never lose sight of the lofty principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. The new order should have as its pillars the principles of sovereign equality, territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of other nations.

The responsibilities of the international community at this critical juncture in history are multifold. They include in the immediate term the acceleration of the process of disarmament, peaceful settlement of ongoing disputes, and the strengthening of the concept of legitimacy and the rule of law in relations between and among States.

In this context, we deeply appreciate the positive steps taken by the United States and the Soviet Union in the field of disarmament. In particular, we welcome the recent initiative taken by President Bush in declaring the decision of the United States Government to relinquish its short-range nuclear weapons. We are also encouraged by the positive response from President Gorbachev. We hope that this historic decision will set the tone for the long-anticipated process of eliminating all nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. We would definitely like to see an immediate halt to the proliferation of nuclear weapons, not only in the areas of conflict but also at the global and the regional levels.

Our attention is similarly focused at this juncture on the urgent need for a durable solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, the core of which still remains the question of Palestine. We feel that a just and comprehensive settlement of the question of the Middle East will be possible only if the process includes recognition of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination and to establish a State

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of their own on their own homeland. We hope that the recent efforts led by the United States, aimed at the convening of a peace conference, will produce positive results.

The problem of Cyprus is another issue which deserves our immediate attention. While supporting the relentless efforts of the Secretary-General to resolve the question, we sincerely urge all parties concerned to make a renewed effort to reach an early settlement of the dispute on the basis of Security Council resolution 649 (1990), which we believe sets forth a fair and practical means of reaching a comprehensive settlement of the dispute.

We have witnessed positive movements in South Africa towards the abolition of the evil system of apartheid, which is an affront to the entire human race. Although there have been some changes, it is a system not even one iota of which is acceptable. Therefore, my delegation supports the continuation of the international sanctions that have been imposed on the racist regime until the whole system of apartheid is totally dislodged.

The recent initiative of the permanent members of the Security Council, along with the relentless efforts of the members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), gives us hope for the settlement of the Cambodian issue. However, we remain concerned about the situation in Afghanistan, where, despite the withdrawal of foreign troops and the agreements that have been signed between the parties, the fighting continues, preventing millions of Afghan people from returning to their homes and resuming a normal life. We call upon all parties concerned to resolve the problem urgently.

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The Gulf crisis was an experience from which the world learned many lessons. The swift and determined reaction of the international community to repel the aggression against Kuwait should be commended. The demonstration of the working of the collective security system emphasized the need for strengthening the concept of, and the mechanism for, international collective security. It also highlighted the fact that such a system needs to be consistently adhered to if international peace and security is to be maintained. There should be no differentiation between countries on the basis of size, power and economic wealth in the application of the Charter. The Gulf crisis and many other recent events have also highlighted the vulnerability of small States and their need for international support in facing security threats of different natures.

We remain strongly convinced that the issue of collective security, including the special problems of the small States, should be kept high on our agenda as we embark on a new international order. In the wake of the current trend towards the easing of international tension, a trend brought about as a result of dialogue and cooperation between the United States and the Soviet Union, the United Nations is being asked to play an increasingly active role as the guarantor of international peace and security. It is a challenge and responsibility that the Organization can effectively accept only with the firm and continued support of all its Members, particularly the larger and more powerful States. For small States like the Maldives the United Nations has always been, and will always remain, the best hope for warding off challenges to their sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Therefore, the Maldives will be keen, with many other small Member States in this Organization, once again to review the issue of protection and security of small States during the current session of the General Assembly,

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and we hope that we will find the same support and sympathy amongst the members of this body as we did two years ago when we initially put forward a proposal on this issue at the forty-fourth session. In this respect, I should like to draw the attention of Member States to the Secretary-General's report on the subject, which recognized, inter alia, that because of their intrinsic characteristics small States may need a special measure of attention and support and that the international community has a vested interest in safeguarding the security of small States. It also said that small States have a limited capacity to provide for their own security.

This is a very valid observation with regard to the realities that we face in our countries. We have a very narrow economic base, and thus any attempt to strengthen the security forces would entail a drainage of resources from other areas of development. At the same time, even a very short disruption of the political and economic mechanism of a country like ours by international adventurers, such as narco-terrorists or mercenaries, would do major harm to the economy, which might require a very long time to recover.

Environmental degradation is an issue which the new world order should have on its priority list. It is an issue which could threaten the very existence of many of our nations represented here at this Assembly. It has been a key concern of the Maldives, given the threats posed due to global warming and possible sea-level rise, which could endanger the very survival of our island nation. Indeed, environmental disasters of even a minor magnitude can have serious implications in countries like the Maldives, as was evidenced during late May this year, when we were hit by unusually strong storms, causing extensive damage. I should like to take this opportunity to express my Government's sincere gratitude for the generous assistance rendered by the

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international community in coping with relief and rehabilitation measures taken by the Government in connection with this disaster.

In concert with other South Asian nations, the Maldives is currently involved in the finalization of two important environmental studies, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) study of natural disasters and the study of the greenhouse effect and its impact on the region. It is our intention to have these two studies completed in time for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, to be held in Brazil next year. The Maldives looks forward with eager anticipation to participating in this very important Conference, with the hope that the Conference will be able to draw up a global environmental strategy that will ensure the protection and preservation of the environment and promote sustainable development for the benefit of future generations.

No agenda of a new international order could fail to include an item on developmental issues. It is this magic term "development" that all countries are striving for. All countries are aspiring to better development of their infrastructure, so that their citizens may enjoy a higher standard of living. However, in what should now be called the old order the opportunities for development were not fair. A small group of countries attained an extremely high standard of living at the expense of the rest of us. The terms of trade and other economic realities have been manipulated to maintain the group of us called "the less developed countries" less developed. With decreasing tensions in the political and military spheres, it is hoped that the resources otherwise channelled to building weaponry will be utilized in helping the less developed countries attain their aspirations. This we hope will be the peace dividend.

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It is with these hopes and aspirations that we are beginning another session of the Assembly. We have an atmosphere which augurs well for the achievement of these aspirations and hopes, which we have held for a long time. We have never had an opportunity like this in the history of the Organization. Therefore, we should not let this opportunity fade away.

Mr. GRANT (Guyana): The political physiognomy of the world has been profoundly altered within recent times. The cold-war era, which generated awesome contending forces and so poignantly shaped and influenced international relations for far too long, is virtually at an end. Gone are the Iron Curtain and the Berlin Wall. The potential for nuclear conflict and its destructive consequences has been reduced, as have many other foreboding features of East-West confrontation. In their place have emerged a new trait of independence and the outline of a new world order, which, albeit still ill-defined, can be discerned by the eyes of faith and hope.

We have therefore entered into a new and promising era of global relationships. Yet the image of the world is still clouded. Principles and purposes which underpin the Charter of this Organization too often continue to be observed in the breach. International disputes have not always been settled by peaceful means, as the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and its aftermath confirm. Nor has the international cooperation for the solution of problems of an economic character been as forthcoming as anticipated.

Hope for the future and concern for it consequently stand juxtaposed. Even as the potential for nuclear conflict has been reduced, recourse to the use of force to settle international and bilateral conflicts remains a serious threat to the preservation of global peace and security. Even as regional cooperation and integration become a global process involving the creation of

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large and powerful economic trading blocs, certain States, driven by forces more powerful and more basic than nationalism, are undergoing centrifugal experiences which presage their fragmentation.

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The centrifugal forces that have arisen from the catharsis in the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and elsewhere represent a challenge to the traditional concepts of national sovereignty and territorial integrity. They raise the ineluctable question as to whether the world will become a unitary constellation as we have long anticipated, or eventually disintegrate into a motley collection of fissiparous States. At the same time we cannot overlook the fact that the collapse of the colonial empires and the ongoing transformations in the Soviet Union have now brought the membership of this Organization closer to universality. There is also an increasing surge towards democracy, the promotion of human rights within all States and the demand to be governed by consent rather than by force. Yet a reluctance persists on the part of some of these States to extend in full the principles of democracy and freedom to the relations between States and in intergovernmental organizations. While they may not always be paradoxical, global trends remain complex. While the world moves towards unipolarity in political terms, economics has established its salience over politics and the international economic environment has become more multipolar in character. Yet the trend towards a unipolar political world in effect has narrowed the options for models of development. As a consequence, more widespread agreement now exists on the critical elements for promoting beneficial and sustained development.

In the face of these complexities, it is incumbent upon us to analyse the current trends and, to the extent possible, attempt to direct their course. This should be a primary task of the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly. We are confident that under the able guidance of Ambassador Shihabi, we will not fail to find the way forward.

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We are for this reason eminently pleased by the election of Ambassador Shihabi to the presidency of the forty-sixth session. This distinction conferred upon him is a recognition not only of his own diplomatic skills, but also of the prestige of his native Saudi Arabia. I am happy to note that our two countries enjoy excellent relations through long established cultural and religious ties.

I also wish to pay tribute to his predecessor in office, His Excellency Mr. Guido De Marco, the distinguished Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Malta, for his exemplary conduct of the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly. He has been a fervent advocate of the revitalization of the United Nations to serve the growing needs of its membership. It is a plea that we must certainly heed if we are to make this Organization adequate and responsive to the altered circumstances of today.

A similar call has been made in his recent report to the Assembly by our much respected Secretary-General on the basis of his long years of experience as the world body's Chief Executive. And new demands there certainly are, since with the passage of time, the international agenda has increasingly expanded. As he demits office, the Secretary-General deserves our profound gratitude for having guided our Organization through a most challenging decade. We can pay him no better tribute, I feel, than to build upon his accomplishments and further strengthen the United Nations.

I have adverted to the principle of universality upon which this Organization was founded. It remains for me therefore to welcome not only the three Baltic States, the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Latvia and the Republic of Lithuania, which have regained their independence, but also the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Republic of Korea, the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands, which have

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elected to accede to membership of the United Nations. I am convinced that these seven States will provide fresh dynamism to the Organization and contribute fully to its work.

It was exactly 25 years ago, on 20 September 1966, that Guyana became a Member of this Organization. Twenty-five years ago we dedicated ourselves to democracy, its processes and its ideals. We resolved to preserve our independence, to develop our resources with our energies and the assistance of friends. Our aspirations today are no different from what they were then. However, we know that we live in a world of stark realities and we are sure that, given an opportunity to be heard, we can continue to contribute to the establishment of a just and peaceful world.

It took Guyana every moment of those 25 years to successfully assert its right to participate fully in regional organizations and arrangements within its hemisphere. For it was in January of this year that Guyana was admitted as a member to the Organization of American States. The road that we travelled was long. And the journey would probably not have been at an end but for the fact that our sister countries of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) were persistent with their call to the organization to extend the universality of its membership to Guyana and its travelling companion, Belize. Other member States of the organization also distinguished themselves in the wake of the CARICOM call. Guyana has expressed its appreciation to all of the member States for receiving it into the organization that is the bosom of the hemispheric family.

It is a source of great satisfaction to Guyana that it is marking its twenty-fifth anniversary as a Member of the United Nations at a time when the character of the global political environment is decidedly more welcome than

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any during our participation in the Organization. This is due to the new détente that underpins the relations between Moscow and Washington. A world order that was tenuously based on terror and mutually assured destruction is progressively giving way to a new order resting on secure foundations of confidence and predictability. I am equally glad therefore that there is now the promise of far-reaching agreement on further measures in the current negotiations on arms reduction. In this regard, Guyana welcomes the recent proposals put forward by President Bush. Now that those proposals have been reciprocated by President Gorbachev, the world appears to be drawing closer to the day when nuclear weapons no longer form part of the armoury either of defence or of offense.

Positive action in the field of disarmament can have beneficial effects other than improving the overall security condition. The link between disarmament and development, which appears so obvious to so many States, can hopefully now receive universal and unqualified acknowledgement, and agreement can be reached on concrete steps to make it a reality.

While the positive developments in the area of arms reduction must be welcomed, it is necessary to be alert to the heightened threat to security that other conditions pose. The most pervasive are the parlous economic and social circumstances of large sections of national populations. The increasing pauperization of peoples the world over should be a matter of global concern. So too must be those situations of conflict and turbulence which, in the circumstances of yesteryear, seemed intractable and unyielding to solutions. I am referring here to the Middle East, South Africa, Central America, Western Sahara, Cambodia and the Korean peninsula, among others. The prospects in relation to many of them appear less foreboding now.

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This is particularly so in Central America, where the remaining sparks of violence in El Salvador and elsewhere are quietly being extinguished. The restoration of peace in Nicaragua and the recent establishment of diplomatic relations between Belize and Guatemala serve to diminish tension in the area and enhance the prospects for regional co-operation. In Cambodia we note the establishment of the representative Supreme National Council, which has begun the process of national reconciliation. In a still divided Cyprus, options for the resolution of the conflict must be thoroughly explored in order to safeguard the welfare and territorial integrity of that country. In Western Sahara there is still hope that a cessation of hostilities will permit the emplacement of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) and allow the United Nations to promote a settlement between the belligerents.

Obstacles to some solutions in other countries and regions, however, still remain, especially where these difficulties inhere in deeply entrenched feelings ranging from notions of racial superiority to the primordial need for territorial space, including beliefs stemming from the expression of national dignity, culture and religion. In South Africa the iniquitous apartheid system is yet to yield fully to diplomatic efforts. As a member of the Commonwealth Foreign Minsters Committee on Southern Africa, Guyana holds the view that pressure through the appropriate forms of sanctions should be maintained on the South African Government so that it completes and adheres to a programme that will make the process for the dismantling of apartheid irreversible. The De Klerk Government must also conduct meaningful negotiations with the authentic representatives of the majority for the construction of a democratic South Africa.

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The Middle East imbroglio has been further complicated by the Gulf war. But this very development makes more valid the need for an international conference in which all parties, including the Palestinians, are involved. Current initiatives to convene a regional peace conference are an encouraging step in this direction.

In this hemisphere, the frigidity of the cold war lingers on in the anomalous hostility between the United States and Cuba. To truly guarantee world peace, it is imperative that détente be generalized. It is now time to bury antagonisms which are the relics of another era. As a friend of both the United States and Cuba, Guyana urges those two States to come together in a new spirit of friendship and cooperation to bring full harmony to international relations.

We realize of course that the ending of East/West rivalries is not the panacea for all conflict situations. Clearly there are problems that have their origins in circumstances other than the cold war. Among the most combustible causes are territorial controversies, national aggrandisement, and old ethnic hatreds. In the instant case of Haiti whose democratically elected government has been overthrown by a military coup, it is the refusal of a minority to accept the popular will of the majority. Such acts of violence are thus a challenge to the role of this Organization under its Charter for the preservation of international peace and security.

In many of the conflict situations to which I have adverted, the United Nations has played a significant part in the search for peaceful solutions as the recent Ministerial Meeting of the Movement of Non-Aligned countries in Accra acknowledged. The Gulf war provided an opportunity for the Organization to demonstrate its capacity to be effective when Member States stand by their

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commitment to the principles and purposes of the Charter. Yet there is a danger in the new political dispensation. It arises from the temptation to bend the international interest either to the national purpose of a single State or to that of a concert of pre-selected Powers. That temptation should be avoided.

There is a widespread feeling that while the Charter makes clear provisions for the maintenance of peace and security these could be utilized more fully. The experience of the Gulf war has prompted a fresh look at the Security Council, the organ primarily concerned with threats to peace. While demonstrably active and influential, the Council can and must do more to discharge the important role assigned to it. In this regard, it should seek to develop machinery that is more capable not only of enforcing its decisions and resolutions but also of preventing the eruption of conflict. Equally important to its effectiveness is complete confidence in its modus operandi. The Council must therefore appear at all times to be democratic and transparent in the conduct of its business. To achieve this, some reform of its operation could be contemplated.

In the new environment of hope for mutually beneficial international cooperation, the question of economic security looms large. Last year, this Assembly adopted two constructive documents. The first, the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, in particular the Revitalisation of Economic Growth and Development of Developing Countries, was agreed upon in special session. The second, the International Development Strategy, recorded our consensus during the regular session. It is a moot question as to whether the provisions of these documents are being implemented with seriousness or at all. We must not only agree on what to do but we must also do it.

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Meanwhile, groups of nations are organizing themselves regionally to promote their common economic interests. This is a logical outgrowth of the global trends in the world economy. Guyana, both as a member of the Caribbean Community and of other major regional economic groupings such as the Latin American Economic System within the Latin American and Caribbean region, is an active participant in the process of regional cooperation and integration. In the wider hemispheric context, the President of the United States launched a bold and imaginative scheme, the Enterprise for the Americas Initiative. This initiative admits for the first time in the history of the economic relations between the United States and Latin America and the Caribbean of negotiations on some of its elements, a situation that existed for the Caribbean Community countries in their relations with Canada, and for some African, Pacific and Caribbean countries in their relations with the European Community.

This initiative has been widely welcomed in the region. Based on mutual need, its progressive implementation through mature consultations can redound to the benefit of the countries of the hemisphere to which it applies.

Despite the advantages afforded by regional economic and trading groups, we need to ensure that those small States within them, no less than those that are outside for whatever reason, are not marginalized. To avert this possibility, good governance, coupled with the principles of equity and fair play, must facilitate the creation of a level playing-field for all countries.

None the less, it should be observed that economic activity in most developing countries, with few exceptions, has slowed over the last year. With continued recession, particularly in Latin America and Africa, the decline has reached the point where the prospects of recovery are becoming

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remote. Poverty has become endemic, as a plague of social ills overwhelms most populations.

We have witnessed the efforts of the African countries to pull their economies out of the morass of stagnation and despair. It is our belief that the critical economic situation in Africa, and throughout the developing world, can be alleviated and tremendously helped by better terms of trade, not just more aid. In this regard, we welcome the Japanese initiative for a summit with African countries to discuss the critical situation in Africa.

Fortunately, there is some recognition of the severe limitations which distressed economies impose on the national capacity to honour debt obligations. There is also grudging recognition that an amelioration of the difficulties in the form of debt rescheduling and debt reduction is still not effective enough to break the impasse, even when coupled with restructuring and reform of national economies under the guidance of the major international lending institutions.

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Developing countries have made an eloquent case in favour of major debt cancellations, which have been already granted on a bilateral basis to some countries and which appear to be an imperative for these nations if they are to jump-start their economies to bring them into the mainstream of international economic activity.

International trade, in particular agricultural trade, reflects a marked depression in prices for primary commodities, which, despite efforts at diversification, remain the only anchor for many developing countries' economies. Protectionism, regrettably, still holds sway in some quarters, denying free access to our products. As a member of the Caribbean Community, we welcome the initiative of some countries, notably Canada, the European Community, the United States and Venezuela, to open up their markets to our region. We hope that the current Uruguay Round will eventually, notwithstanding its halting progress, evince extensive agreement leading to a rapid liberalization of world trade.

On the question of development financing, it is of particular concern to us that the developing countries must now compete with the "economies in transition" - a euphemistic reference to the States of Eastern and Central Europe. As these States fulfil their desire to be fully integrated into the world economy, it will clearly be necessary for the international community to respond appropriately to their needs in terms of capital, technology and organization.

It should be forcefully recalled, however, that other economies are also in transition: those of the developing countries. There is an essential difference, however. It is that the economies of Eastern and Central Europe are in transition from a command economy to one that is market-oriented. On

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the other hand, the developing countries are already integrated into the world economy, but on unequal terms. The urgent transition that most of them require is from underdevelopment, spawned by colonialism, and attendant poverty to the primary stage of the satisfaction of basic needs at minimum levels. The response of the international community to those two sets of needs should, therefore, not compromise the requirements of either group of countries. Accordingly, we echo the Secretary-General's call for an international conference on development financing to address these crucial issues.

A relatively recent addition to the global concern with development is the environment. The rapid degradation of the planet on which we live and the dire consequences it has for our future have arrested the attention of the international community. Fortunately, there is a broad consensus on the urgent need for concerted action to cope with the dangers which unrestrained national activities in this field can create.

Under the authorization of this Assembly, preparations are well under way for the World Conference on Environment and Development, to be held next year in June in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. It is, I believe, the most ambitious enterprise attempted in international cooperation. As Guyana sees it, the Conference should seek to forge, through negotiations and mutual concessions, a compact which, it is hoped, will record international consensus on a complex and interlocking series of issues and be truly reflective of the interdependent character of our world. It is therefore critical to developing countries that the imperatives of development be not lost in the technical debate on the environment.

From Guyana's standpoint, certain clear requirements should be universally embraced if a successful outcome to negotiations is to

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materialize. These include the provision to developing countries of new and additional resources, access to environmentally sound technology at no cost or one that is low, and also institutional strengthening and capacity building, nationally and regionally. More specifically, Guyana would urge that the countries that are endowed with biodiversity benefit adequately from its possession and its use and that the relationship between biodiversity and biotechnology be comprehensively developed. As a low-lying coastal State, and as an Amazonian country rich in biodiversity, Guyana is playing a full part in the noble international endeavour to provide environmental security.

Another facet of the multidimensional problem of development is the international traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. The great strides that have been made in fighting this scourge must be maintained. I am glad to recognize that there is now greater cooperation between States and more involvement of non-governmental agencies in the effort to reduce demand and curtail supply. The United Nations and its relevant agencies are being increasingly effective in playing a constructive role. Our collaborative efforts must continue.

At this conjuncture and in the context of the profound changes of which I spoke earlier, what is required is structural adjustment that is all-encompassing and thorough-going. There has to be structural adjustment in perception; structural adjustment in national economic organization; and structural adjustment in international relations, investing them pervasively with the attributes and practices of democratic governance, between States and within international organizations. It will not happen at one fell swoop. A start has been made, but unless the adjustment is fully embraced we can face the frightening prospect of new hegemonies and the marginalization of several actors on the international stage.

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Guyana has been alive to those imperatives. Four years ago we embarked upon the reconstruction of our economy. The programme is being successfully implemented with the cooperation of the international institutions and the bilateral assistance of friendly States constituting a support group. We have encouraged the full participation of the private sector in the recovery programme. We have opened our markets to trade and investment in an effort to integrate our economy fully at the global level. But the adjustment process has been arduous and painful, especially for the vulnerable sectors of the population. In general, however, our ability to adhere to the programme attests to cohesion within the society and the recognition that there is no viable alternative.

Central to this structural adjustment programme is our belief that our country's stability depends crucially on the maintenance and continued enlargement of conditions of freedom in every sphere of national life. This belief has found expression in a series of reforms that would place national elections, which will be held before the end of this year, and other aspects of the democratic process beyond credible challenge. As my President recently declared,

> "If I were to be asked to summarize the grand objective towards which our current nation-building enterprise is directed I would say: to complete as rapidly as possible the evolution of Guyana as a country of free people, practising free enterprise in an open society."

We are unequivocally committed to the consolidation of a democratic order and to the full development of the human potential.

Our Organization formed part of a new world order in the wake of the Second World War. In looking back at the order of 1945, we find there are today more voices representing wider and more varied interests. These

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additional voices seek to influence the orientation of the new order. Their purpose is to ensure that it operates in the interest of the world's people and that the results are symmetric.

Many occasions will arise for all Members of this Organization to demonstrate by their actions their will to create a democratic new world order. In Guyana's view, the current discussions and negotiations on the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development provide a unique opportunity for the demonstration of that will and purpose. We can, if we are alive to the urgency of the situation and to the requirements of the time, by the results we achieve at that Conference set a blueprint for international cooperation in the future. Were we to fail, the new order would remain in a state of prolonged gestation and the promise of partnership would be postponed. Worse, the negative elements of the present malformed order would remain to haunt us with grave potential consequences. The goal, therefore, is to show that a global partnership is possible. Indeed it is an imperative. Let us resolve to proceed apace to build a truly effective global partnership.

Mr. TOURE (Guinea-Bissau) (interpretation from French): I wish to add my voice to those of the preceding speakers, and on behalf of my country congratulate Mr. Samir Shihabi on his outstanding election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session. His talent, experience and tact are guarantees of the success of our work.

We extend our deepest appreciation and gratitude to his predecessor, Mr. Guido de Marco, who so effectively guided the work of the forty-fifth session.

Seven new countries have just joined the great United Nations family - the Republic of Korea, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. On behalf of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau and its President, Joao Bernardo Vieira, and Government, I would like to convey to these new Members and friends our best wishes for success in the United Nations. I assure them of Guinea-Bissau's full cooperation and support.

We also wish to thank the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for the tireless manner in which he has guided and inspired our Organization. He has introduced a new spirit and new dynamics into the United Nations system.

The forty-sixth session of the General Assembly is being held at a time of both uneasiness and hope - while a new international order is being discussed, poverty and destitution persist, in contrast with wealth and abundance. This unfavourable situation to the countries of the third world is characterized by acute structural imbalances.

(Mr. Toure, Guinea-Bissau)

On the one hand the economies of the countries of the North are steadily forging ahead and, on the other, the overwhelming majority of those of the countries of the South are collapsing. The reverse financial and monetary flow and the inequitable distribution of wealth are gradually relegating the poor countries to the sidelines. Indeed, international economic relations continue to be based on injustice and inequality.

The weakest countries, especially the least developed among them, are faced with many challenges and are bearing increasingly heavy burdens.

In our opinion, there is an urgent need for international economic cooperation to be based on the growing interdependence of our economies.

The constant decline in commodity prices, the excessive foreign-debt burden of the developing countries, reduced aid and the financial flow towards the developed countries, and the deterioration of the environment - all are challenges to the global economy.

The signing by the Heads of State or Government at Abuja of the Treaty setting up the African Economic Community is indeed timely.

We in Guinea-Bissau believe that immediate steps should be taken towards a real integration of transport and communications, with a view, in particular, to the marketing and distribution of our products. For this purpose, subregional economic projects as well as technical support institutions must be strengthened.

We also believe that our economic partners of the North should endeavour to allow our products greater access to their markets and to improve the impact of measures already taken in this direction.

(Mr. Toure, Guinea-Bissau)

Most African countries are obliged to devote a large part of their meagre export earnings to the importing of foodstuffs. Guinea-Bissau is no exception and food self-sufficiency can be attained only if our small economies turn to productive activities such as improved agricultural practices and better marketing, storage and preservation techniques.

The burdens of debt and debt servicing are urgent problems that must be resolved, and appropriate measures must be found to solve them. This may seem to be a problem between debtor and creditor countries but the fact is that a solution depends to a large extent on the political will of the creditor countries.

We appreciate the initatives already taken by some States in this regard, and we wish to express our gratitude for their efforts. Unfortunately, however, we note that the results of these efforts have been insufficient, bringing economic growth and development in the African countries to a standstill.

Guinea-Bissau is striving to develop its human resources, for they are vital to economic growth for development. Thus, it is necessary to take into account the related social factors, such as health, education, housing and so on. Along these lines, we urge our partners of the developed world to come to our assistance, with a view to enhancing and developing our human resources.

Our country is striving to provide its population with good education, adequate health care, literacy training and education for all children of school age. We are counting on international assistance to help us attain these goals, for all such measures also aim at providing greater opportunities for the entire population, above all, women, in education and training in order to improve their economic and social status.

(Mr. Toure, Guinea-Bissau)

In so doing, we should like to assure the international community that we are aware of our responsibility as the primary beneficiary of our own social and economic development. None the less, we wish to make an appeal for greater understanding and sensitivity to our cause in mutually advantageous cooperation with our partners.

At this very moment, our National Assembly is in the process of adopting, in a climate of sincere and open dialogue, certain laws which formalize the process towards a multiparty system and the establishment of a pluralist democracy based on human rights and fundamental freedoms. As we see it, democracy means the participation of the people in decision-making concerning the future and sovereignty of the nation. We believe that the democratic pluralism to which we aspire will strengthen our national unity and benefit our country greatly by mobilizing all sectors for development, peace and security.

The Government of Guinea-Bissau and its people deplore the recent events in Haiti. The government of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, elected democratically by direct universal vote and, what is more, in an election held under the auspices of the United Nations, was overthrown by a handful of the military with a thirst for power. Guinea-Bissau vigorously condemns that deplorable act, which is anti-democratic and anti-constitutional, and calls for the immediate restoration of the legal government of Haiti.

Following the release of the historic leader of the African National Congress, Mr. Nelson Mandela, the government of Frederick de Klerk has taken steps towards the elimination of apartheid. Nevertheless, we see that the system continues to exist in flagrant violation of human rights. We welcome the attitude of Mr. Nelson Mandela and that of President Frederick de Klerk

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and encourage them in all their efforts to eradicate the shameful system of apartheid. We urge the De Klerk government to eliminate apartheid and establish a more just, democratic and multiracial society. Guinea-Bissau believes that the universal principle of one person, one vote, must be applied in the elections in South Africa. In other words, the right to direct universal suffrage must be granted to all South Africans.

Guinea-Bissau is also deeply concerned about the Israeli-Arab conflict, which has now lasted 43 years. My country encourages all initiatives that might be taken with a view to settling that conflict. In fact, since the Gulf War, active diplomacy has been at work with a view to the organization of an international peace conference with the participation of all the parties to the conflict. That diplomacy has afforded new prospects for settlement of the problem.

The Middle East is a highly sensitive and unstable region. The cause of this instability is known to us all. With the steady deterioration of the situation in the occupied territories, the daily lot of the Palestinian people is one of bitterness and suffering. We are convinced that the withdrawal of Israel from the territories occupied since 1967 will lead to a just and lasting solution in compliance with the relevant Security Council resolutions - resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973). Only in that way, we believe, will the right of the Palestinian people to a homeland be respected, together with the right of Israel to live in peace within secure and recognized borders.

One year ago, here in this Assembly, we were discussing a flagrant violation of international law and the use and abuse of force in violation of good sense and international norms of behaviour. At that time, Guinea-Bissau

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condemned the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq. We are deeply gratified today at the complete restoration of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Kuwait, a Member of the United Nations family and of the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Now that the crisis is over and that the rule of law has been restored, we appeal to the two fraternal countries to work together to bind the wounds caused by that sad and unfortunate war.

That crisis has had negative consequences for my country. Guinea-Bissau, as members are aware, belongs to the category of least developed countries and depends greatly on foreign aid. Because of this situation, we have had to redouble our efforts to meet the basic needs of our social and economic development.

With regard to Western Sahara, we congratulate the Secretary-General of the United Nations on his tireless efforts to find a just and comprehensive solution to the problem. We encourage the Secretary-General and his co-workers to persevere in that direction. We also urge the parties to the conflict to work together to reach a peaceful, just and lasting solution to the problem. The Secretary-General can rely on the complete support and cooperation of my country and of my Government for the implementation of any decision taken in a spirit of harmony and dialogue for the maintenance of the peace and security of the Sahara.

The Government and people of Guinea-Bissau support the people of East Timor in its just liberation struggle for self-determination and independence. On the basis of the mandate given him by the General Assembly of the United Nations, we commend and encourage the efforts made by the Secretary-General for many years to find a just political solution to the problem of East Timor. The people of Guinea-Bissau, which has historic and

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cultural ties with the people of East Timor, have witnessed with profound sadness and anguish the domination of our brothers under the unjust occupation of the invader. We are convinced that these abuses, which are known to the international community, must not only be condemned but must also come to an end.

(Mr. Toure, Guinea-Bissau)

We also urge the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to continue on the path of dialogue towards the reunification of the Korean peninsula.

For our part, we are encouraged by the progress achieved in the dialogue and negotiation now under way in Cambodia, which should soon be crowned with success. We congratulate the parties involved, and particularly His Royal Highness Prince Norodom Sihanouk, on his courage, self-sacrificing spirit and great wisdom in dealing with the Cambodian question.

As for Yugoslavia, we urge the parties to the conflict to display good sense and wisdom, for the good of the Yugoslav population and for the defence of the Yugoslav homeland. We support the initiatives in this respect by Europeans and urge that they press forward with those initiatives.

The lack of significant progress on the question of Cyprus in spite of the unceasing, and commendable efforts by the Secretary-General, supported by the international community, is very regrettable. We believe that the withdrawal of all the foreign troops would facilitate understanding among the parties concerned. Respect for the independence and territorial integrity of nations and of States is a sacred principle for the Republic of Guinea-Bissau.

We welcomed and hailed the signing on 31 May 1991 of the Estoril agreement between the Government of Angola and UNITA. This act, which united all the citizens of that country, will certainly contribute to social progress and viable economic development. We are grateful to all those, near and far, who contributed effectively and positively to the signing of that agreement, in particular Portugal, the United States of America, the Soviet Union and the United Nations.

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We are certain that our brothers in Mozambique also will find the most appropriate way to speed up the process now under way so that in the near future promising results can be achieved in the negotiations between the various parties for the establishment of peace and security in that country and in the region.

As for Liberia, we urge the parties to the conflict to redouble their efforts in order rapidly to find a viable and just solution to the dispute.

We welcome the measures taken and the efforts made by the Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to resolve the Liberian question and thereby establish an atmosphere of peace, understanding and security in the subregion.

Guinea-Bissau is a country of peace and therefore its motto is fraternity, agreement and understanding among peoples and nations. That is why disarmament is a moral imperative for Guinea-Bissau and, we believe, for the international community at large, because it is the basis on which international peace, justice and security will be built.

We were pleased to learn of the recent disarmament initiatives taken by the two super-Powers. The Government of Guinea-Bissau congratulates these countries and their Governments on their courage and their determination to continue their efforts in this regard.

We are convinced that the considerable sums that will be released by arms reduction at the international level should be channelled towards development assistance, education and the struggle against disease, hunger and illiteracy.

My country hopes that the efforts by the African States to turn Africa into a denuclearized continent, as called for in the 1964 Cairo Declaration of

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the Organization of African Unity (OAU), will be given the necessary support by the international community.

The current threat to the environment is a phenomenon which must be curbed without delay. The population explosion increases the poverty of the developing countries. The threat to the environment is a danger to the future of mankind. The countries of the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel, of which Guinea-Bissau is a member, are faced with major natural disasters which jeopardize their socio-economic development. If the environment is to be protected, we must speed up the development process in the poorest countries because, in our opinion, underdevelopment is a threat to the environment. We feel that protecting the environment also means improving the economic and social conditions of our peoples.

We in Guinea-Bissau hope that the new and supplementary financial resources should be substantially increased and then provided to the developing countries, and that the transfer of safe technologies should also be assured on preferential terms. Mutual recrimination will not solve our problems, because we are all in the same boat.

It is in this spirit that our delegations must participate together in the Conference on Environment and Development, which will take place in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro. We agree with those who believe that the primary task is to harmonize respect for and preservation of the environment with the rational dynamics of development. In our view, the first step in solving this problem of the environment must be to eradicate poverty, misery, hunger and unemployment.

Mr. DRAME (Mali) (interpretation from French): I should first like to extend to Ambassador Shihabi of Saudi Arabia the warmest congratulations of

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the delegation of Mali on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session. His abilities and the wealth of experience he has gained from his long diplomatic service to his country, Saudi Arabia, which enjoys great prestige internationally, guarantee the successful outcome of our work.

(Mr. Drame, Mali)

My delegation is particularly pleased by this choice because our two countries have had good relations for centuries - reflected, for example, in the pilgrimage to Mecca of Mali's Emperor Kankou Moussa in 1324. Let me assure the President of my delegation's full cooperation with him as he performs the important functions entrusted to him by the Assembly.

My delegation also extends its congratulations to Mr. Guido de Marco, who led the work of the forty-fifth session with wisdom and efficiency.

I take this opportunity also to pay a well-deserved tribute to Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, the Secretary-General, who has strengthened the Organization's role with devotion, farsightedness and perspicacity.

The admission of a new Member is always an important step towards the Organization's universality. My delegation therefore welcomes the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Latvia and the Republic of Lithuania.

As the second millenium draws to a close the world is undergoing profound changes. The cold war, which led the major Powers to sink vast sums into the race for weapons of mass destruction, is now over. In my delegation's view, the disappearance of the blocs created by the cold war should make it possible to put greater emphasis on new areas of common interest and new relations of cooperation with developing countries.

In Africa the changes have taken the form of the fall of dictatorships based on monolithic systems that stifled the deep-seated and legitimate aspirations of peoples to freedom and justice and impeded all economic and social development.

(Mr. Drame, Mali)

The country I have the signal honour of representing here has not been unaffected by the struggle to acquire fundamental freedoms. The people of Mali rose up against a greedy and incompetent dictatorial regime that had plunged the country into poverty. The youth of Mali, its women and its democratic forces, both civilian and military, paid heavily to bring an end to 23 years of repression, corruption, social injustice and waste. Since the people's uprising of March 1991, Mali has been led by a Transitional Committee of Popular Safety and a Transitional Government, which have launched the country on a process, on the one hand, of establishing a pluralistic democracy and a state of law and, on the other, of reorganizing and restoring our economy with a view to achieving greater social justice.

From 29 July to 12 August this year a national conference was held at Bamako which brought together all the country's vital forces and socio-political tendencies. That conference, which was marked by a fruitful and open debate on the country's future, adopted a draft constitution that established the foundations for true democracy based on scrupulous respect for human rights, the multi-party system and separation of powers, as well as on effective participation by the people in their own development and management of their affairs through regional collectives. Furthermore, to buttress the state of law the Transitional Committee and the Government decided that Mali should ratify the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and to abolish the State Security Court, which was a special tribunal established and used for evil ends by the former regime.

Since June 1990 a state of crisis has existed in the northern regions of the country. An uprising by young Tuaregs has created an atmosphere of

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insecurity in that part of the country. Despite the Agreement signed in January 1991, some of the fighters are continuing the confrontation. Defenceless villages have been the targets of regular attacks by armed groups, who plunder shops, set fire to administrative offices, steal cattle, seize vehicles and run away. Disturbed by this situation, Western non-governmental organizations that were assisting us in our struggle against poverty have left northern Mali.

Notwithstanding such actions, the Government of Mali is patiently seeking a negotiated democratic solution to the crisis. Thus, a conference on the problem in the north has been announced for mid-November at Timbuctoo. The Transitional Committee and Government are in contact with various factions of the Tuareg Movement, in an attempt to encourage them to participate constructively in the peace meeting at Timbuctoo.

Our draft convention adopted at the National Conference provides for institutions that will guarantee fruitful decentralization, by which the people will be able to administer themselves through their elected representatives in village councils and regional factions and assemblies.

We are seeking a democratic solution to the crisis because of our convictions and because the state of law we wish to achieve in Mali compels us to do so. Hence, we appeal to all States that can exert any influence on the Tuareg youth movements to help us solve this problem so that we may all work together to achieve the economic and social development so needed in all parts of Mali.

Soviet-American rapprochement has been accelerated. The changes taking place in the Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries and the dissolving of the Warsaw Pact have significantly contributed to creating an atmosphere of trust between former adversaries. The atmosphere of mutual

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understanding and trust that now prevails in the world enabled the great Powers to cooperate in the Security Council to put an end to Iraq's occupation of Kuwait. On that occasion the United Nations diligently and effectively implemented the resolutions of the Security Council. We truly welcome that. We would hope that the Organization will be able to act in a similar manner vis-à-vis all the resolutions adopted by the Council so that the international community may stop giving the impression that it is following a double standard.

Now that the Gulf War is over, we must deal with the situation prevailing in the Middle East. Israel continues to pursue its policy of establishing settlements in the occupied Arab territories, and the tragedy of the people of Palestine is still with us. We therefore hope that the current initiatives to convene a peace conference on the Middle East will lead to a comprehensive settlement that will recognize the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and guarantee security for all States in the region, in keeping with the relevant resolutions of the Organization.

In Africa, where colonization has ended, apartheid, this crime against humanity, still has not been eradicated from the continent. True, the fierce struggle of the South African people, international pressures and the initiatives undertaken by President De Klerk have brought about some improvement in the political situation in that country. Yet the overwhelming majority of the people of South Africa still has no right to vote, to determine its fate or freely to choose its leaders. The tribal violence, fomented and supported by certain backward-looking forces, is continuing to bring sorrow to the country.

(Mr. Drame, Mali)

My delegation feels that a total lifting of the economic sanctions is premature, and we urge the international community to continue its pressure on the South African Government in order to ensure that the process now under way leads to the complete dismantling of apartheid and the establishment of a democratic and multiracial society.

In Angola, the signing of the cease-fire agreements, the establishment of a multi-party system, and negotiations between the various parties to the conflict have opened the way to a new era of peace in that country. We express the hope that the people, so long traumatized by war, may at last be able to devote themselves to the country's reconstruction and development.

We also hope that peace and fraternal concord can be quickly achieved in Mozambique, and we must all work towards that end.

As for Namibia, which acceded to independence under United Nations auspices, it remains deprived of Walvis Bay, its only deep-water port. We support the negotiations now under way between the Governments of Namibia and South Africa with a view to reintegrating that entity into Namibian territory.

In Western Sahara, the forthcoming referendum on self-determination, under United Nations auspices, cannot but raise hopes that that part of Africa will soon have lasting peace, an element indispensable to the subregion's development.

We welcome too the remarkable progress made in Liberia along the road to peace and national reconciliation, under the aegis of the Economic Community of West African States.

With regard to the Horn of Africa, my delegation urges the Ethiopian authorities to continue their dialogue with a view to strengthening peace in

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that country, and we appeal to the groups fighting in Somalia to respect the terms of the agreements signed at Djibouti last January.

In Cambodia, the establishment of a Supreme National Council, headed by Prince Norodom Sihanouk, has created new prospects for peace. The continuation of that salutary process and the success of the peace negotiations will surely lead to the organization of free elections that will put an end to the Cambodian people's long years of suffering.

(Mr. Drame, Mali)

On the Korean peninsula, my country, which has diplomatic relations with both Koreas, hopes that their admission to membership in the United Nations will be a prelude to their peaceful reunification.

Mali would encourage the communities of Cyprus to continue the negotiations begun under the auspices of the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

On disarmament, the easing of tensions in international relations has contributed to the conclusion of numerous agreements in recent years. The signing last July in Moscow of the Strategic Arms Limitations Talks (SALT) agreements, which had been the subject of rather difficult negotiations for decades, encourages our belief that the world is moving towards an era of peace.

New States have added their signatures to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons; the work on a total ban on chemical weapons has produced encouraging results; and the United States Government has recently taken a position in favour of the elimination of short- and intermediate-range missiles. All of this creates an atmosphere of trust, which is a prelude to real disarmament.

In this respect, Mali welcomes the announcement made on 27 September 1991 by President George Bush of measures taken unilaterally by the United States concerning nuclear arms and nuclear forces and we also welcome the response by President Gorbachev to these initiatives. My delegation believes that this political will can come to completion only if it is accompanied by the allocation to the development needs of the poorer countries of the resources thus made available.

I cannot talk about international relations without mentioning with a sense of anguish the serious economic crisis that affects the developing

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countries in particular. The burden of foreign debt, the drop in export earnings, the inadequacy of the resources devoted to development - all of this has worsened socio-economic conditions in many countries.

The debt of developing countries, entered into under conditions that did not take into account the interests and concerns of most of the people, has now exceeded $1.2 trillion and it is one of the major obstacles to the success of economic reform programmes, structural adjustment and recovery of growth in those countries. So far, approaches taken to finding a solution to the serious problem of debt, although encouraging in some respects, have come far from meeting the real economic concerns of the developing countries.

Seeking a solution for the developing countries' external-debt problem requires greater solidarity within the international community and shared responsibility between creditors and debtors. The growth objectives of the developing countries must also be taken into account.

In this regard, my delegation would support the proposal, contained in the annual report of the Secretary-General, that an international conference on the financing of development should be convened. The international community must also pay special attention to the implementation of the Paris Declaration and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s, adopted by the Second United Nations Conference in Paris in 1990.

Appropriate action must be taken urgently, at the international level, to ensure remunerative prices for commodities and to dismantle tariff and non-tariff barriers that hamper the exports of the developing countries. My delegation hopes that current negotiations under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the holding of the forthcoming session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) will yield positive results.

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In Africa, despite the laudable efforts made by the African Governments in implementing structural-adjustment programmes, the economic situation and living conditions are becoming increasingly difficult. The United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery, 1986-1990, which had raised great hopes, did not, unfortunately, meet the legitimate concerns of the people and leaders of African countries for growth and viable economic and social development. We would urgently appeal to the international community for urgent and appropriate action towards the adoption of a consistent programme of cooperation for the development of Africa for the 1990s. In this connection, my delegation welcomes the initiative of the Japanese Government for convening a summit conference on development in Africa in 1993.

The determination of the African countries to emerge from economic stagnation is expressed in their firm resolve to build viable economic structures of integration. The recent signing, in Abuja, Nigeria, of the treaty establishing the African Economic Community is an excellent example of this.

Sustained economic and social development cannot be achieved unless there is a healthy environment. Mali, victim of drought and desertification, has to work within the constraints of a rather difficult environment in carrying out its various development projects and programmes. Thus, my country attaches great importance to the success of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development to be held in Brazil in 1992.

Mali, in January 1991, played host to the Pan-African conference on environment and lasting development. Now Mali reaffirms its adherence to the Bamako Convention banning the importation of waste into Africa, and the Bamako commitment, which defines Africa's five main priorities in environmental matters.

(Mr. Drame, Mali)

The World Summit for Children, held in 1990, enabled the international community to set new goals as it works to improve the living conditions of children throughout the world. Mali co-chaired the World Summit for Children and wishes to reaffirm its devotion to the cause of children and its commitment to accord priority status to the implementation of the Declaration and Programme of Action issued at the Summit.

The democratic opening-up begun in most developing countries and the economic liberalization which has resulted therefrom need constant support from the international community. Young democracies deserve support, individually and collectively, for there can be no true democracy without development.

Qualitative changes in my country last March exposed the economic crimes of the old regime. Those who supported that regime, using secret banking arrangements, shifted great amounts of capital abroad, capital that, if repatriated, could help to solve some of our financial difficulties.

We can see how the single party covered up its criminal practices. In a country where children die of diarrhoea and other everyday illnesses, where school-aged children do not go to school for lack of money, a gang of crooks diverted billions of CFA francs into foreign banks. The Transitional Committee for the Safety of the People (CTSP) and the Government of Mali are firmly resolved to bring them to justice, in keeping with the rule of law and with international norms. We shall bring to justice all those who, by abusing their power, have led to bloodshed among our people and all those who have perpetrated economic crimes.

Here, we would appeal to all countries and peoples of the world, in the spirit of solidarity and justice, to cooperate with Mali in searching for and

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retrieving those funds. We would ask our partners to follow the example of the Swiss authorities, who have just made available to the Government of Mali the necessary means to try to get back the diverted capital. To help Mali recover and repatriate the funds of the old leaders is to help the economic development of our country and to help our people socially.

The preservation of our democracy deserves the full support of the industrialised countries, and they can help to do this by restoring the diverted capital, which is in fact the fruit of the criminal plundering of the resources of the African people, who have been bled dry.

Mankind is at a decisive stage in history. All together, we must build a new international order, one with a broader and fairer outlook, a new international order founded on justice.

AGENDA ITEM 8 (continued)

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK: SECOND REPORT OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE (A/46/250/Add.1)

The PRESIDENT: I draw the attention of representatives to the second report of the General Committee, which was circulated this morning as document A/46/250/Add.1.

The report concerns the request by Honduras for the inclusion in the agenda of the current session of an additional item, entitled "Crisis of democracy and human rights in Haiti".

The General Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the item should be included in the agenda. May I take it that the General Assembly decides to include in its agenda the additional item entitled "Crisis of democracy and human rights in Haiti"?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: The General Committee also decided to recommend to the Assembly that that item should be considered directly in plenary meeting. May I take it that the General Assembly adopts that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: May I take it also that the Assembly decides that the item should be considered with priority because of its urgent character?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: In that connection, I should like to inform representatives that the item will be considered after the general debate on Wednesday, 9 October.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.